

It is my hope that anyone reading this letter will never have to go through the experience of heartbreak of having your infant son or daughter die to neglect or poor care at a daycare which is licensed by the State of Michigan.

My son Dallas Taylor was 7 weeks old when I had to return to work after maternity leave. The last thing I said out loud after kissing my children goodbye and telling them that I loved them was, "Please Jesus protect my children."

I was at work my first day back from maternity leave and had left my son at the daycare along with his 3 year old sister. I had told the daycare manager details of my son's habits and instructions such as:

1. Do not lay him on his stomach when he is sleeping, he does not like it and cries, lay him on his back and that I had 3 cousins who infants died of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
2. Do not lay him down right after eating as he will vomit so sit him in a seat for at least half an hour.

At 12:00 my boss called me into his office and said we had to go to a meeting. Immediately, I thought something was wrong as he would not tell me details and took me to the administrator's board room where upon opening the door, my husband, 3 year old daughter, police officers, and a hospital administrator were present. I knew something was horribly wrong and immediately screamed "where is Dallas." The nightmare began as they told me Dallas died at the daycare.

Events were slowly to be revealed to me as time went on...

The daycare owner/caregiver for the children had fed my son and then laid him down on the bed on his stomach immediately after feeding him. She also had him in a bedroom by himself with the door closed. The room Dallas was sleeping in was two rooms away from the living room where she was with the other children. You had to go from the living room through the kitchen to the bedroom. When my husband went to pick the children up, the caregiver went into the bedroom to get Dallas and came out holding my dead son, handing him to my husband.

He had vomit on his clothes and the autopsy results later read: SIDS and Aspiration Vomitus.

So the haunting question is why...why...why would you put an infant in a room by himself that far away from you and not check on him physically? It has never been revealed to me how long it had been before the caregiver had last checked on my son.

My three year old daughter said her brother was crying and when she wanted to check on him, she was told, "he's just a fussy baby," and the caregiver would not let my daughter go to him.

Life events change the course of everything...not always for the good. Events like this, as you know, are devastating nightmares and unfortunately the end results cannot be corrected. Not a

day goes by, 26 years later, that I do not remember my son Dallas, wondering what he would have look like, what would he be doing, how different life would be if he lived. I wish I could go back in time and change the course of events that would not have gone to work that day.

Please, I ask of you to support House Bill No. 4797 in order to provide better care and safer environments for our children when they are in daycare so that they are in good hands and that no one else has to suffer this tragedy and heartbreak.

I feel this bill would help to prevent senseless loss of our most precious assets... our children.

Sincerely,  
Sandy Ellery, SIDS mom

Son Dallas Taylor Pete Ellery, Date of Birth: August 21 1990, Date of Death: November 4, 1990